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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, October 11, 1932.

FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY

Subject: "Planting Bulbs for Spring." Information from the Bureau of Plant Industry, and the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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Just to prove to you that I'm a woman of my word, I'm going to start off today with the recipe for noodle ring that I promised you yesterday. You can make the ring of homemade noodles or noodles that you buy. One big advantage of this recipe is that you can use it in so many ways and give it so much variety. Noodle ring, you see, may be filled with any kind of creamed meat or stew or even with creamed fish for a Friday menu.

You'll need eight ingredients. Pencils ready to jot them down? All right.

1/4 pound of noodles
2 quarts of boiling water to cook them in
1-3/4 teaspoons of salt
1 teaspoon of grated onion
2 tablespoons of butter
2 eggs
1 cup of milk, and
2 or 3 drops of tabasco sauce

I'll repeat that list of eight. (Repeat.)

First cook the noodles for about 20 minutes in the water to which 1 teaspoon of the salt has been added. Drain well, add the onion, butter, tabasco sauce, and the remaining 3/4 teaspoon of salt. Now beat the eggs, add the milk, then the seasoned noodles and stir them until well mixed. Now butter your ring mold, pour in the mixture, place the mold in a pan with water surrounding the mold and bake in a moderate oven until the mixture has set. Turn into a heated platter and fill the center with a creamed mixture or a stew.

There. Now let's turn from food to the garden. I've been wanting to talk about flowers for days. Just this morning W. R. B. the garden adviser, reminded me that this is the time to plant tulips, daffodils, narcissus and crocuses.

As every good gardener knows, the way you treat bulbs in the fall has a lot to do with the flowers that bloom in the spring. First, you need to prepare the soil well for the bulbs. Clean off all the left-overs of former crops. Then, if the soil is too dry to work, water it, and wait a day or so, till the water has penetrated. Then spread one pound of finely ground bone meal over each three square yards of surface the spade the soil to a depth of eight or nine inches. Next, put on a second application of bone meal--one pound of meal to each five square yards of surface. Rake the soil until the lumps are broken and the bed is nice and smooth.

I asked W.R.B. how far apart and how deep to plant the tulip bulbs.

He said, "Before you begin planting, place the bulbs on top of the ground, seven or eight inches apart. First, put a row of bulbs entirely around the bed, about six inches from the edge. Then arrange the bulbs more or less in rows or squares throughout the interior of the bed. After the bulbs are all placed on top of the ground just where you want them, make holes for each one with a long narrow trowel. Set them in, root downward of course, and about four inches deep. On heavy soils three inches may be deep enough. Light sandy soils will require a depth of five inches. If the soil is dry when you start planting, give the bed a light watering and cover it with an inch or so of well-rotted manure. That's about all you need to do except to keep the beds free from weeds until the bulbs begin to peep through next spring."

Next, we talked about putting crocus bulbs in the lawn. Nothing more cheery than a bright crocus here and there in early spring.

W.R.B. suggested using a narrow trowel or a sharp, round stick to make the holes. "All you have to do," said he, "is to make a hole about two or three inches deep, drop the bulb in and cover it. Be sure the hole is completely filled. Crocus bulbs remain from year to year and blossom in the spring before time to mow the lawn. A little fertilizer scattered over the lawn each year early in the spring will give better flowers, also a better lawn."

"What about narcissus?" I inquired. "I have a friend who wants some white narcissus in her spring flower garden but she says she doesn't know how to plant them."

"Well," said W.R.B. "that's not difficult. You put the narcissus in the ground just as you do tulips, only a bit deeper. Once the narcissus is started you can leave the bulbs in the same place three or four years without disturbing them. You don't need to move the bulbs until they become so thick that they need separating. Are you considering any other flowers for your spring bed, Aunt Sammy?"

"Yes, indeed. I want to have at least a few sweet smelling hyacinths next year."

"Hyacinths go in the ground in much the same way as tulips, only you don't need to plant them quite so deep, nor so early in the fall as tulips. Hyacinths thrive in a rich soil."

W.R.B. says that tulips and narcissus are his favorites for the spring flower garden. He likes to plant them in little clumps or groups for bright color. Sometimes he uses them for borders, he says, and sometimes he plants groups of them in the open spaces of the shrubbery. Now and then he has a single tulip growing in a bed of iris or some other plant. He says he has some tulip and narcissus bulbs in some of his borders that haven't been disturbed for five or six years and still go on blooming.

"And by the way, Aunt Sammy," said W.R.B., reaching for his hat, "by the way, this is the right time of year to transplant pansies, violets and a number of the perennials. You can plant your peonies in early October and you can divide your Japanese iris any time now. Yes, and this is a good season to sow grass seed or move sod. If possible, do these two jobs just before a rain."

Several letters asking questions about pie have come in during the past week. I'm saving them to answer tomorrow.

